

Washington, DC- Today the U.S. House voted to extend and improve the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), one the top priorities of the 111th Congress. Congresswoman Gwen Moore (WI-04), a long time champion of expanding SCHIP, released the following statement upon passage of the legislation:

"It is shameful that in the wealthiest country in the world, nearly nine million children lack health coverage. Nearly two-thirds of those without coverage are in low-income families and more than half are in working families. These children are significantly less likely to visit a doctor when they are sick and receive the care they need to stay healthy. With President-elect Obama's strong support, this bill demonstrates the 111th Congress' commitment to enacting improvements to help states cover additional uninsured children. On a related note, I am optimistic that by expanding coverage of SCHIP today it will be a first step towards finally providing meaningful healthcare for a greater percentage of Americans tomorrow.

"The reauthorization of SCHIP is necessary, fiscally responsible legislation that will help struggling working families provide health insurance for their children. During these difficult times providing health care coverage to working families who earn too much for Medicaid and earn too little for private coverage is not only the right thing to do it is also cheaper than using America's emergency rooms as primary care physician providers.

"This bipartisan bill will provide health care coverage for 11 million children, thousands of whom live in Wisconsin, by extending coverage to 4.1 million uninsured children who are currently not enrolled in SCHIP and Medicaid. As unemployment levels continue to rise we will see more and more Americans lose their health care coverage. We cannot afford nor allow the most vulnerable Americans to go without medical care; for if we ignore their needs now we will not only jeopardize the well-being of our next generation as they go without needed care, but we will continue to spend more money on health care than necessary, as far too many will continue to rely on emergency care instead of preventative health care."

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